

KERATAN AKHBAR

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'Address Padu fears'



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Allay concerns on database hub registration, govt urged

PETALING JAYA: The Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) has called on the government to address public concerns over registering with the national Central Database Hub (CDH).

Its president Datuk Syed Hussain Syed Husman told *theSun* that it is making the call due to the public's slow progress in registering with the hub due to ongoing fears over user data security and other issues.

"The public should be briefed on the rationale for establishing the CDH and have all their concerns addressed."

"Among others, questions have been raised on the need to register with the CDH when their data is already available at the National Registration Department, the Inland Revenue Board, Social Security Organisation, Employees Provident Fund and even utility companies, among others."

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim launched the CDH on Jan 2

Public should be briefed on necessity of move, considering data already present in several other official platforms: MEF

to register Malaysians aged 18 years and above. The database targets to register about 29.8 million Malaysians.

However, as of Jan 22, only 1,518,746 Malaysians have registered with it. The figure accounts for 6.9% of those aged 18 and above.

Syed Hussain said through the CDH registration, any institution

which requires national data could obtain it from the Statistics Department, which is the lead agency managing the database.

He stressed that the collected data is not on individuals but on aggregate national data, "so there is little to worry about individual privacy breaches as this is well protected under the Statistics Act and the

Personal Data Protection Act 2010".

He said the Statistics Department also supports the government in making the right decisions for target groups that need help, and to design long-term strategies to address the issues being faced.

He added that unless public concerns are promptly addressed, the people would continue to ignore the call to register with the CDH before the March 31 deadline.

Syed Hussain said at a meeting between MEF and the Statistics Department led by chief statistician Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Uzir Mahidin on Jan 22, he had invited Mohd Uzir to brief MEF members on the CDH through the federation's regional meeting platforms.

"We hope such briefings will help draw more private sector employees to register with the CDH, as MEF supports the need to do so for proper economic planning and to focus on core issues affecting the people."

Syed Hussain said the government must have comprehensive data to develop the correct and most effective strategies, which is why registering with the hub is a must.

"As a nation, we urgently need to

digitalise in line with the rest of the world. Speed and accurate execution of policies are the keys to success as they will help to even address national, regional and international issues with accurate data."

Syed Hussain allayed fears expressed by some MEF members by stressing that the CDH is not a political instrument "but an instrument for the people".

He said MEF has always supported the creation of the CDH under the Statistics Department, the national custodian of data.

He added that data captured in the CDH would be the backbone of all national policies and would make the country more efficient.

"Details extracted from such data will help the government to target and focus the execution of policies to address the various issues affecting the country. Data is power and a strategic asset."

Syed Hussain said successful countries use their data to drive economic, political and social growth, and in today's world of information, the use of digitalisation has speeded up the process of analysis to arrive at more accurate decisions.